

**“Freedom from themselves”**

**GENDERED MECHANISMS OF CONTROL, POWER, AND RESISTANCE IN PRISON  
DOG TRAINING PROGRAMS**

by

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## **Abstract**

During the past twenty-five years, the number of prison programs in which inmates train dogs has increased rapidly. A lack of systematic studies to address the effects of these programs on staff and inmates has led to limited, anecdotal accounts of the impact of these programs on correctional institutions and their occupants. In addition, an analysis of differences in these effects for men and women is missing. This paper proposes to bridge this gap through qualitative research conducted in two Kansas prisons (a men's and a women's institution) in which inmates train assistance dogs and dogs made available for adoption by the general public. Drawing primarily on the works of Erving Goffman, Michel Foucault, and Jill McCorkel, I focus on the mechanisms of social control and resistance within these programs and their effect on the inmates participating in the program, utilizing a gendered analysis throughout. Using the experiences of the men and women in these programs, as well as those of correctional staff and community members, I propose that these programs provide an important outlet for resistance for the participants.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	iv
Acknowledgements .....	v
Dedication .....	vi
CHAPTER 1 - Introduction to Topic .....	1
The Total Institution of the “Soul” – Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman .....	2
“Docile” Body and Reformed “Soul” .....	2
Transforming the “self” .....	4
Resistance .....	7
Gendered Structures and Identities .....	10
CHAPTER 2 - The duality of prison programs – therapy and control? .....	14
Institutional Animal Programs .....	14
Animal Programs in Correctional Institutions .....	15
CHAPTER 3 - Research Method and Setting .....	19
CHAPTER 4 - Findings .....	22
Social control .....	22
Surveillance .....	22
Control over participation .....	26
Resistance .....	27
Resistance through program rules .....	28
Resistance through training .....	30
Personal resistance .....	32
CHAPTER 5 - Discussion and Conclusion .....	38
Conclusion .....	41
References .....	43
Appendix A - Interview Schedules .....	46
Appendix B - Informed Consent Statement – Administrators and Staff .....	52
Appendix C - Informed Consent Statement – program participants .....	54
Appendix D - Coding tree .....	56

## **List of Tables**

Table 3.1 Dog Project interviews.....	21
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## **Dedication**

This thesis, and the research that provided the rich data to develop the themes discussed, would not have been possible without the stories and experiences of the men and women within these institutions. I dedicate this work to them, in hopes that they continue to know their worth to me. I also dedicate this thesis to Karen, who consistently provides me with the unending need to learn more, and to educate myself and others.

## **CHAPTER 1 - Introduction to Topic**

As prison populations increase and funding for programs in institutions steadily decreases, implementing therapeutic, family, educational, work, and community-oriented programs is a difficult endeavor. Correctional facilities and concerned public individuals continue to struggle with the confinement/rehabilitation dilemma, with increasing emphasis on the confinement end of the spectrum. Innovative agendas have, however, found their way into the walls of correctional institutions, including substance abuse treatment, nurseries, holistic health sessions (meditation, yoga), and animal adoption and training. Of these, animal-based programs have shown increasing support over the past few years, mainly due to anecdotal accounts of their therapeutic effects on inmates.

This thesis investigates mechanisms of power, control, resistance, and change in three dog training programs, drawing on a theoretical frame that highlights the role of prisons as institutions of social control. Analysis of in-depth interviews of those most affected – inmates, staff, and community members – will demonstrate the impact that these programs have on institutional settings and the individuals in them. I will address the benefits and challenges that face those involved in these programs. Ultimately, I will demonstrate the critical role that these programs play as an outlet for resistance in the prison system, and as a mechanism for change regarding relations on both sides of the institutional fence. Contrary to the idea that most programs in prisons function primarily as additional forms of social control and surveillance, with rehabilitation/therapy as a secondary concern, I will argue that the dog training programs are unique in that relations among the staff, inmates, dogs, and the community directly confront, and in many ways undermine, the traditional correctional reconstruction of the true “self” of the inmate. Although social control and surveillance are an inevitable part of any program in a correctional facility, I will demonstrate the ability of the dog program to serve not only as a mechanism for social control and surveillance, but also for resistance, and ultimately, a sense of freedom.

In the course of this research, I raise three questions. First, in what ways are prison animal programs mechanisms of social control? Second, what possibilities do they offer for

resistance, and what is the effect of “successful” resistance? Finally, how is control and resistance in these programs gendered?

### **The Total Institution of the “Soul” – Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman**

Perhaps the most influential modern perspective on the prison may be found in the work of Michel Foucault. In his work, Foucault deploys the prison as a metaphor for the operation of systems of social control in the modern era. Yet it is important not to lose sight of his analysis of the literal institution of the prison, which for Foucault is the prototype of the “total institution,” a disciplinary machine aimed at changing the souls of inmates.

#### ***“Docile” Body and Reformed “Soul”***

Foucault’s concept of social control is reflected in his study of the very incarnation of control, the prison, and the application of punishment in the penal system. Foucault notes that changes in punishment reflect the stratification of power in society; the pre-modern world saw a strict top-down operation of power, while the modern world is faced with “micro-physics of power” which transcend bureaucracy, institutions, community, and individual members of society (Foucault, 1977: 26). As the form of power relations began to shift, so too did the agents and mechanisms of punishment; where there was once a king there is now only a ‘headless’ figure. As the actual and symbolic power of the king were replaced by the state, the body was no longer adequate as a tool for control. Instead “a punishment that acts in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations” of individuals became the focus of changing power relations (Foucault, 1977: 16). The tortured body, as an object to control, is no longer a means to an end, instead the meticulous training and regulation of the actions of the body are the first steps to changing, and controlling, the ‘soul’ of the man, “the soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body” (Foucault, 1977: 30).

The modern prison, according to Foucault, is an instrument to reform the ‘soul’ rather than punish the body (Foucault, 1977: 16). However, when addressing the punishment toward both the body and the soul, the latter of the two is used inconsistently. Foucault does not provide a consistent usage of the concept of the soul, nor does he adequately address what he means by the soul – it is left as a assumed concept. As an object capable of punishment, or as a tool



through which power and resistance penetrate the individual's sense of identity – in this Foucault is never clear. However, Foucault does address the soul-body dynamic, indicating that control over one does not necessarily indicate control over the other. Early prison reformers assumed that an emphasis on work would fix the problem of “fatal idleness,” which they argued was the cause of crime (Foucault, 1977: 240). Early prisons did indeed use work as “religion,” through labor, and the pride it instilled, their hope was that the soul could be reformed and liberty regained (Foucault, 1977: 240). The goal of the prison – through work, supervision, and the training of the individual – was to create an obedient, “docile” subject; and many prisoners did indeed become more automatic, even predictable, in their daily routines (Foucault, 1977). These examples of the flawed character of the inmate, indicated by a “fatal idleness,” and the emphasis on personal (religious?) transformation shed light on the context of the soul. Indeed, Foucault does address this soul-body dynamic through examples such as these, indicating that control over one does not necessarily indicate control over the other.

The surveillance of inmates is a key aspect of the prison institution, a task aided by extensive record keeping on the part of various “disciplines;” criminology, sociology, and psychology to name a few. Foucault argues that these disciplines, constantly acquiring and exchanging knowledge of the prisoner, helps to create the most useful object of the penal system – the delinquent. The delinquent is the faceless representation of the “biological knowledge” gained from the complete life histories of individual prisoners (Foucault, 1977: 249-250). The delinquent is the very essence of the criminal regardless of the actual offense committed; he (or she) is the “kernel of danger” in the criminal that facilitated the offense (Foucault, 1977: 254). In the manner of the utilization of the ‘docile body’ of the prisoner, the “little soul” of the criminal – the delinquent – is the instrument of control (Foucault, 1977: 255).

Delinquents represent both the known character of the criminal and the faceless potential criminal; thus they perform an important function for both the legal system and society at large in that they are the ultimate form of deviance. The legal system finds in the delinquent the ability to categorize convicts based on the nature of the crime committed and on the type of delinquent committing the crime (Foucault, 1977: 254). According to Foucault, delinquency allows for the establishment of the concept of the criminal as a social dissident who, through the knowledge gained by the prison disciplines, could be an object of reform; Foucault demonstrates this in the presentation of the concept of the “carceral archipelago” (Foucault, 1977: 256).

The prison's architecture played a central role in this achievement by deploying a "panoptic" scheme in which inmates could never be sure whether they were being observed. The goal of all of these elements was the transformation of the soul of the inmate, the production of a self-controlled, docile body, through which knowledge could be gained and social control enacted. The threat of being caught in a deviant act was always present; often strict codes of silence and penitence were enforced along with detailed timetables – both staff and inmates were subject to these forced behaviors. Today, the replacement of the central tower with cameras increases the level of surveillance in all rooms, halls, common areas, and outside grounds. The goal of these modern mechanisms of control remains the same and increasingly includes the docile actions of staff as well as inmates.

Foucault states that the same concept of the 'docile body' is present in other institutions as well; the mechanisms used to "reform" the prisoner through constant surveillance and scripted actions exist within society outside of the prison, in factories, schools, barracks, hospitals; all of which resemble the prison (Foucault, 1977: 228). All of social life, indeed individual life, is thereby subjected to constant manipulation and molding; little is left untouched. According to Foucault, the penal systems and social institutions are merely the staging ground for visible social control; it is in the daily, interactive lives of members of society that social control achieves its true, less visible purpose – through "self-control." Thus, what began as a physical concept for control, the Panopticon, eventually became embedded within society, beyond the walls of these institutions, including prison. The concept of reforming the soul and training the body, originating as a more "humane" form of punishment, is now a normalizing agent in society.

### ***Transforming the "self"***

The embodiment of both social control and surveillance is most often illustrated in the context of the prison. Indeed, the works of both Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault find their greatest contributions to social inquiry in the walls of the "total institution" of the prison, and for Goffman, the asylum, in the formation of the "delinquent," the manipulation of the "self," and in the imprisonment of the "soul" (Goffman 1961; Foucault 1977). Much like Foucault, Goffman does not provide a consistent usage of the "self:" at times it is the organic body of the individual, the socially constructed individual, and the embodiment of personal awareness, identity, and

agency (Cahill, 1998: 135). There are distinct similarities between the soul and the self, in particular the context within which power and resistance is discussed, and the manner in which Foucault and Goffman place the soul and the self within the embodiment of the individual, as an aspect of their identity. Following the framework of Cahill (1998), the soul and the self will be used as complementary concepts to discuss the “sociology of the person” – the reflexive identity, agency, and character created through interaction by the individual. While Foucault illustrates the impact of the structure of the prison on the creation of a “docile body” and the overall resulting societal mechanisms of social control, Goffman demonstrates the reformation of the “soul,” specifically the development of the institutionalized “self.” By firmly placing the effects of the institution on the individual, Goffman is able to provide a more detailed glimpse into the process of internal emotional and mental institutionalization.

A key argument in Goffman’s presentation of the total institution is the discussion of the violation of the individual’s ‘boundaries’ – those physical, emotional, and cognitive barriers which separate the realms of the social world: environment, society, and individual. As these boundaries are broken, often collapsed upon one another, the previously understood rules governing social interaction within specific contexts and the identities associated with them, such as the role of ‘parent’ or ‘child’, are now superseded by a new identity and formal social rules: that of the “inmate” (Goffman 1961: 37). Eventually this “self” – the sense of autonomy regarding ones’ actions, thoughts, and even emotions, is replaced by the institutions’ regulation of these aspects of the self; the fear of formal and informal sanctions creates a new process of self-regulation in which the inmate defines themselves according to the social system within the total institution (Goffman, 1961).

For Goffman, social interaction within the institutions operated on a system of shared meaning and exchange. The production of the “inmate” engages all aspects of the institution, defined and characterized through information gathered and assigned by correctional officials, researchers, and experts. Thus, the inmate is the person created through the rules, structure, and interactions of the institution and its staff with the incarcerated individual – a form of adult socialization (Goffman, 1961: 168-169). This creation of an “institutional personality” contributes to the formation of the institutional “self” – the internalization of the mechanisms of institutional control over the body and mind of the inmate. The process is marked by Goffman as an intersection of agency, structure, and ideology in that the inmate successfully engages

within the prison culture as an active participant, incorporating their position in the institutional hierarchy into their identity and interactions, understanding and utilizing their insider status as an inmate, including rules, behavior, and interpersonal relations, to function and survive within the correctional facility (Goffman, 1961). Although many of the individual's social experiences outside the walls of the institution can indeed provide a basic guide for social behavior within the prison, the personality and identity of the individual outside the walls of the institution does not directly transfer into the social hierarchy and structure of the institution; thus the creation of an institutional personality and an institutional self becomes a part of the process of becoming an inmate.

Foucault regarded the prison as an instrument to reform the soul rather than punish the body (1977). In addition to the invasive nature of surveillance, Foucault argues that the disciplines, constantly acquiring and exchanging “knowledge” of the prisoner, helped to create the most useful object of the penal system – the ‘delinquent’ (1977). The design of the prison, the austere panopticon, therefore allows for the surveillance of the inmate for both security and documentation reasons. In this manner, Foucault presents the concept of the prisoner as both the offender, and as the codified “offender” – an object of knowledge. The “self” mentioned by Goffman, created within the institution, results from the internalization of this knowledge – the delinquent offender becomes the “inmate.”

Extending this analysis to prison programs, it can be argued that their intended effect upon the individuals participating in them is to further this process of institutionalized socialization and social control. In particular, programs designed to instill proper work ethic, salvation through hard labor, and provide treatment for various forms of deviant behavior (drug and alcohol abuse, sexual molestation, anti-social behavior, etc.) aid in the “reforming” process described by Foucault, and in the modification of the personal “self” into a more socially conforming one. At the same time, these programs also help to define and create the “delinquent” by contributing to the production of institutional “knowledge” about the inmates within them. Thus, in many ways the programs in prison serve a similar function to many forms of primary socialization found outside the walls, such as the creation of the “schoolchild” or “worker.”

In this manner, the reformed “self” of the inmate also undergoes a transformation in which deviations from traditional gendered expectations of behavior and identity will also

encounter corrective mechanisms of social control within the institution in general, and through both compulsory and optional prison programs. Indeed, the promotion of educational, technical, work-release and domestic programs have been both gendered and racialized (Britton 2003). These mechanisms of gendered control within the institution often mirror the position of women and men within the social hierarchy outside the prison walls, reinforcing the prison rhetoric of “rehabilitation” and “reformation” in a gendered context. The modern prison model called for personal discipline and responsibility through hard labor and workforce training – a clear male-centered paradigm that remains a central goal within the correctional institution. For women, in contrast, prison programs focused on correcting the “harsh” and “masculine” characteristics of female offenders through domestic training, proper beauty care and image presentation, and work release programs in domestic, clerical and secretarial positions have not changed significantly since women were initially placed within correctional facilities. Although the format for these programs has changed, including the adoption of male-modeled “boot camp” prison programs within female institutions, the goal remains the same: the promotion of heterosexuality, proper mothering, and economic self-sufficiency through workforce participation (McCorkel 2003).

### ***Resistance***

Foucault’s analysis of the prison, and Goffman’s discussion of the total institution, is fitting in this study, but it is not simply their discussion of the control over, and creation of, the inmate that provides a framework for analysis. Resistance is of key importance as well. Foucault argued that the mechanisms of resistance extended from the mechanisms of power and control – thus the two were intimately connected. Power, in Foucault’s argument, does not operate only in a top-down manner – it is both vertical and horizontal in application, thus providing normalizing pressure and control through peers as well as authorities. In a similar fashion, resistance would have to engage all levels of power, and therefore would require individuals to confront the very process of conformity in both social institutions and interactions. Goffman, presenting a more optimistic perception of resistance, draws particular attention to the processes of secondary adjustments made by individuals in institutions to maintain a boundary between the institutionalized ‘self’ and their prior sense of identity. One of the key areas of resistance noted by Goffman is the development of “free places:” physical areas within the

institution with limited surveillance, areas in which an individual could “be his own man” (Goffman, 1961: 231). Various forms of “deviance” occur in these places, including drinking, gambling, smoking, etc; either with no knowledge by staff, or with staff merely respecting the boundary. Thus, the ability to undermine the mechanisms of control and surveillance also contribute to the development of the “self” within the institution – the control over the body and the soul is not absolute.

Goffman identifies the “underlife” of the institution as a key arena for resistance, a space in which both inmate and agents of authority engage in actions aimed at both reaffirming the acknowledged power structure and routinely undermining it by “working the system” (Goffman, 1961). Through acts of resistance, social bonds within the institution are formed and reformed between staff, inmates, and occasionally outsiders. Goffman draws attention to the social exchanges in institutions, focusing on the limited resources available for economic and personal relations; coercion often appears alongside “buddy” relations (Goffman, 1961: 262-302). Therefore, resistance within these institutions is often characterized by both individual acts aimed at physical or mental removal from the system, and interaction and group activities designed to establish alternative social relations within and in regard to the larger institution. Acts of resistance, when successfully carried out, demonstrate “that he [inmate] has some selfhood and personal autonomy beyond the grasp of the organization” (Goffman, 1961: p. 314). Considering the perceptions of resistance argued by these theorists, it is clear that the ability to resist within the walls of the institution is possible, but difficult unless the individual is able to gain access to “free spaces,” engage in minor acts of deviance, and maintain a sense of “self” independent of the pressure of peers and authorities. Given the level of surveillance by fellow inmates, staff, and technology, actively resisting is difficult. Thus, resistance cannot be viewed merely as actions effectively taken against a person or system of power. In similar fashion to Weitz (2001), I argue that the process of individual and group resistance functions as a mechanism to distance themselves from a system of subordination, promote unity among those resisting, and challenge the ideologies that support such subordination (Weitz 2001: 670). Therefore, “trivial” acts of resistance that provide individuals with small moments of self-empowerment, or merely provide a cushion of autonomy from a repressive system should be viewed as no less important than large scale organized resistance movements (Weitz 2001). When viewed in this manner, successful resistance can take place within a larger social context,

or in the smaller realm of interaction and self identity. This definition of resistance fits well within the frameworks of Goffman and Foucault, as Weitz focuses on the “accommodation – resistance” process, emphasizing how mechanisms of resistance operate within an acknowledged power structure according to the established rules and boundaries of that structure. Goffman’s “secondary adjustments” and Foucault’s power-resistance dialectic are both examples of this process in which mechanisms of resistance occur within, and in relation to, the system of control. In the context of the correctional institution, however, if programs in prison are primarily designed to enforce, reward, and instill conformity in the inmates, then resistance through these programs is also problematic. In short, mechanisms for resistance in prison are embedded within if not countered by the mechanisms of power and control over inmates through all aspects of the institutional environment. Therefore, discussion of resistance in the thesis will engage a social control/resistance dialectic to demonstrate the processes within these programs.

## **Gendered Structures and Identities**

While profound in their critical analysis of the total institution, and mechanisms of social control specifically, Foucault and Goffman's analyses have been criticized for, among other issues, a lack of discussion of the gendered nature of punishment. Since before the reformatory era, prisons in the U.S. have been gendered projects, particularly with regard to their methods of punishment, control, and rehabilitative programs (Britton, 2003). Nineteenth century reformers' opinions on the treatment of women ranged from a belief in their status as "irredeemable" to their inherent ability to be reformed through the "influence of kindness" (Britton, 2003). The growing trend of utilizing male-modeled prisons, programs, treatment facilities, staff training, and views of basic inmate needs illustrates the lack of concern for the gendered consequences for female inmates, clearly demonstrated in accounts of abuse of female inmates in correctional facilities (Britton, 2003).

Jill McCorkel's ethnographic studies of Project Rehabilitate Women (PRW), a drug treatment program in a women's correctional facility, demonstrates the gendered nature of social control, punishment, and surveillance in the criminal justice system (1998, 2003, 2005). Utilizing Foucault's framework of positing the mechanisms of social control in the context of social relations, McCorkel argues that the participants in PRW undergo a gendered form of punishment and surveillance such as group confrontation "pinball sessions" and interpersonal surveillance (2003). Although PRW began as an innovative treatment program, aimed at "habilitating" female drug offenders, McCorkel contends that the program instead emphasizes the "flawed" nature of these women, described by program staff as "addicts" – individuals incapable of escaping the cycle of dependency and manipulation specific to female drug offenders (1998, 2003, 2005). Much like Foucault's focus on the "body" of the prisoner as the intended target of the correctional system, and through which access to the "soul" would also be granted; the focus of the drug treatment program is on the "self" – the individual's personal identity.

In correctional discourse, the offender's 'self' is viewed as not only flawed, but as in need of re-direction. The offender is argued to possess a self-definition which is not properly developed with regard to the standards of the larger society. As a total institution, the prison



seeks to construct, and eventually instill, a new self-image for the offender – one in which the errors of one's ways are recognized and accounted for through confinement. McCorkel notes that successful completion of the PRW is often demonstrated by an inmate's acceptance of the institutional definition of their 'self', resulting in full participation in the program, rather than resistance to the methods of control used by the program (1998, 2003, 2005). PRW staff argue that the program can break the cycle of addiction and dependency in which the women are trapped; to do so, the women must learn to accept their addict 'identity' and be responsible for their actions. The theories presented by Goffman and Foucault are clearly represented in McCorkel's analysis, and demonstrate the prevailing focus of personal salvation through physical and emotional self-control, and acceptance of a reformed "self."

McCorkel's research expands upon the original works of Foucault and Goffman, however, in her analysis of the particular mechanisms of control and resistance used on and by the women. In contrast to men in these programs, staff members view the women as "wallowing" in their victimization, and therefore weak (McCorkel 2003: 51). A central part of this process is the adherence to "traditional" gendered expectations (heterosexuality, self-restraint, hygiene, and family relations), that are considered missing in the "diseased" participants (McCorkel 2003: 70). Indeed, staff members label the women in PRW "whores" for their addictions and for their perceived promiscuity in relations with men (McCorkel 2003: 56). In PRW, the constant surveillance by staff and fellow inmates creates an atmosphere of distrust among the program participants, allowing few outlets through which the women can resist the control and identities placed on them. Resistance does occur, however, through the development of "critical space" in the form of the "crackhouse" – a small room partially hidden from view in which the women meet whenever possible (McCorkel 1998). McCorkel claims that the staff are unaware of the activities in the crackhouse; it is "critical space" in that it enables conversations and activities to be conducted without the threat of surveillance. The women in PRW thus utilize this limited physical space, and the interactions and activities within the space, as a mechanism for distancing themselves from the control over them, and the identity assigned to them, by the program and its staff. Indeed, McCorkel argues that critical space is possible wherever surveillance is weakened, or is perceived by the women to be so (1998). In this manner, the crackhouse serves as a form of secondary adjustments for the women, specific to the structure and gender of the institution. Therefore, this "critical space" differs from Goffman's "free

space” in its relation to the awareness (or lack thereof) by staff, and emphasis on the interactions within the crackhouse that more precisely enable the resistance (1998: 242-243). It is indeed the interactions within this space that help the women to undermine the control and labeling process of PRW staff.

As important as this form of resistance is, it can also be a mechanism of control. Due to the emphasis on interpersonal surveillance by members in PRW, even the realm of critical space can be breached. McCorkel notes that the women utilize the crackhouse to plan organized acts of resistance against staff; however, if confronted by staff, there is the fear of discovery if fellow inmates ‘snitch’ rather than maintain silence – thus the crackhouse can be used to determine who can be trusted in the program, though it is a risky process (1998). McCorkel’s emphasis on the gendered nature of surveillance and control within PRW provides the context for which the crackhouse served as a physical and conceptual “space” to be utilized by the women as a mechanism of resistance against the program.

McCorkel’s study of gendered punishment is a powerful component of the scholarly work on gendered organizations (Acker 1990, Britton, 2003). In particular, the analysis of both surveillance and punishment as, in fact, gendered processes demonstrates the argument that so-called ‘neutral’ institutions and organizations are lacking in neutrality (Britton 2003). The traditional ideology associated with women’s “proper” behavior is reproduced in the walls of the institutions, thus confronting the elements of ‘non-conformity’ commonly associated with female offenders. Britton elaborates on this reproduction of cultural expectations of both masculinity and femininity within the interactions between guards and inmates, expanding the gendered organizations framework by incorporating behavioral expectations based on race, class, and gender. Prisons thus recreate the larger stratified societal structures within which the male and female correctional staff already interacts, thus bringing these expectations into the walls of the institution. Of particular importance in Britton’s study, and thus to the discussion of the gendered mechanisms of social control in the institution, is the emphasis on how traditional gender and sexuality ideologies outside the institution control both staff and inmates. Since both staff and inmates are held to these standards, this poses a challenge for individuals engaging in behaviors that are not “proper,” such as women employed in the hypermasculine occupation of prison guard being forced to perform clerical work in order to realign their position with traditional gender ideology on labor participation. McCorkel adds to this discussion by

providing detailed accounts of both the external process of control and rehabilitation of the women in PRW, and the personal process of internalization of an institutionally and culturally defined, proper “self.” The difficulty of resistance within the correctional structure, and a gendered structure at that, and the importance of it, is perhaps the most telling aspect of this analysis of social control.

## **CHAPTER 2 - The duality of prison programs – therapy and control?**

The current vision of prison as primarily custodial and aimed at punishment rather than reformatory is indeed hegemonic, reflected in the majority of prison programs aimed at providing menial tasks to provide busy-work for inmates. Alternative programs and agendas do exist in the correctional setting, however, including “restorative justice” programs, drug treatment, in-prison nurseries, and yoga and meditation programs. Public support for such programs has increased continued to increase, creating a dichotomy of “supermax” facilities emphasizing only detention and punishment (boot camp programs are popular here), and alternative treatment facilities aimed at addressing the needs and problems faced by those within the correctional structure (Britton and Button, 2006). These programs, though innovative in their format, still operate within the correctional setting, and are subject to many of the same mechanisms of social control. If inmates participating in prison programs are subject to increased surveillance by staff and fellow inmates, what is the purpose, and how do the mechanisms of surveillance operate? Why would inmates choose to undergo increased social control and surveillance as a result of being in such programs, and are the benefits or challenges faced different for the participants? In order to address these questions, one must move beyond these descriptions of the ‘prison’ as an institution, and look into the prison as a setting in which resistance, change and control play out in the lives of prisoners.

Considering these theories on the prison as an institution of social control, resistance, change, and containment, how then does the implementation of a progressive program, arguably aimed at the very “soul” of the inmate, both reinforce the goal of the prison as a transformative institution, and yet undermine the process of institutionalized socialization? I will explore these questions by drawing on a case study of such a program, one in which inmates train dogs.

### **Institutional Animal Programs**

The field of human-animal interaction (HAI) first began to gain international recognition in the early 1980s, pushed into the academic spotlight with the establishment of the concept of

the human-animal bond (HAB) (Hines 2003). An international and interdisciplinary goal was espoused by early supporters of the HAB, though until recently most contributions have come from the field of veterinary medicine. However, now scholarly attention regarding the HAB has begun to include the fields of psychology, sociology, social work, public health, and the broad field of medicine (Hines 2003). In that last 25 years, groundbreaking research has indicated both physical and psychological benefits of HAI, resulting in the implementation of animal-assisted therapy (AAT) and pet therapy programs (PTPs) in institutional settings as diverse as hospitals, nursing homes, juvenile detention centers, mental hospitals, schools, individual homes, and prisons (Lai 1998; Furst 2006). Both scientific and anecdotal evidence has contributed to the support of these programs, though the research is far from comprehensive.

### ***Animal Programs in Correctional Institutions***

Accounts exist of animals being used for therapeutic purposes in institutions in the United States as early as 1919 (Strimple 2003: 71; Britton and Button 2006). In 1975, the first formal animal program began when an inmate at the Lima State Hospital in Ohio adopted an injured sparrow; the resulting effects on the behavior of the inmates prompted a provisional animal therapy program. At the conclusion of a year-long study, the researchers discovered that inmates on the ward with animals required 50% less medication, exhibited less violence, and had fewer suicide attempts when compared to inmates on a similar ward without access to animals (Harkrader et al. 2004; Britton and Button 2007). Six years later, the Washington Correctional Center for Women in Gig Harbor, Washington, developed the first modern dog training program, including housing of animals and specialized inmate and animal training, located in a prison setting (Strimple 2003: 72; Furst 2006; Britton and Button 2006).

In addition to dogs, some institutions use cats and other small animals; inmates in a number of prisons train wild horses taken from private and public lands to be sold to private owners. Recently, horse rescue programs have also been introduced to prisons, similar to the most common form of the dog programs in which unwanted dogs from local animal shelters are provided obedience training by the inmates, then returned for adoption. Inmates in many other institutions work alongside non-profit and for-profit organizations to provide early socialization or final training for assistance dogs who serve individuals with disabilities (Furst 2006). These prison-based animal programs (PAPs) differ from traditional animal therapy programs in that the

primary goal of the prison program is the training of the animal; any therapeutic effect is secondary (Furst 2006).

In adult correctional facilities, there has been limited systematic study to provide data on the prevalence and effects of prison programs in which inmates interact with animals (Britton and Button 2006). There is some evidence, though limited, that animal-based training programs reduce recidivism (Cushing and Williams 1995; Strimple 2003), decrease the number of behavioral infractions among inmates (Cushing and Williams 1995; Lai 1998), increase self-esteem while decreasing depression (Walsh and Mertin 1994; Cushing and Williams 1995), and perhaps challenge the traditional relations between staff and inmates (Cushing and Williams 1995; Harkrader et al. 2004; Britton and Button 2007, forthcoming). Walsh and Mertin's study, of a prison dog training program in an Australian women's institution found that the women responded positively in interviews and self-assessment surveys to the program, and to the animals specifically and experienced less depression (1994: 126-127). Along similar lines, Cushing and Williams studied the Wild Horse Program in a New Mexico facility in which minimum security inmates trained animals adopted through the Bureau of Land Management. The researchers noted that although the rates of recidivism for program participants were lower (25%) than the overall state levels (38.12%); the program was found to be most effective if combined with additional substance abuse programs (Cushing and Williams 1995: 104). The results of the informal questionnaire, and follow-up in-depth interviews indicated that the overall perceptions of the program by both staff and inmates were positive; staff noted the "nurturing role" the inmates assumed, and cited the sense of responsibility given to the inmates as particularly important. In addition, though the inmates enjoyed the relative freedom and autonomy associated with working under limited security and supervision outside the prison walls, no inmate had attempted escape (Cushing and Williams 1995). The wild horse program also reduced disciplinary infractions, both minor and major reports, even after participation ceased (Cushing and Williams 1995: 109).

The most comprehensive study to date of the prevalence of prison animal programs is Furst's (2006) national survey of prison administrators; 92% of the states contacted (46 states) responded to the survey. Of these states, 36 had animal-based prison programs. Furst notes that 98.4% of administrators said they would recommend the program to other administrators (2006: 18). Such programs were more common in men's institutions (56.7%) than women's (22.4%)

due to greater funding pools for men's institutions; entrance requirements for admission ranged from formal job interviews to psychological pre-screening in addition to formal interviews (Furst 2006: 14, 16). The respondents viewed the new-found sense of responsibility among the participants as the primary benefit – a common approach used by prison administrators to highlight the effectiveness of prison programs (Furst 2006: 18). In addition, Furst notes that the connection to the community was clearly a factor in the implementation of programs, as the majority operated on the community service and service animal models (Furst 2006:13). From this standpoint, these programs appear to serve a dual purpose – one which benefits those 'inside' the fence, as well as those on the outside. Indeed, Furst notes the important role that individuals play in the implementation of these programs, in particular the community-based and therapeutic forms – it is the efforts of key administrative staff, community members, and even fellow and former inmates that often bring these programs to the institutions (Furst 2006). Depending on the forms of the program (i.e. farm-based work programs versus community-based therapy programs), the intentions of the individuals implementing them will vary, as will the effects of these programs on the inmate participants. With regard to the discussion of resistance within the context of power, the ability and mechanisms of resistance and control used by, and held over, participants will also depend on the form of program, and the intentions of those implementing it. Several areas of concern can be raised as well, regarding increased levels of scrutiny from staff and other inmates, security issues, potential (though yet undocumented) harm to the animals, potential harm to inmates or staff due to issues regarding the animals, and finally, the effects of giving up the animals, and thus severing an emotional bond (Lai 1998; Iannuzzi and Rowan 1991, Furst 2006; Wilson and Barker 2003).

Contrary to the general tendency to adopt practices, programs and institutional structures from men's prisons, the first officially sanctioned prison-based dog training program originated in a women's institution. These programs are therefore somewhat unique in that the multitude of program models, and the range of institutions in which they are found, hint at the widespread application of these programs in both men's and women's correctional facilities. Therefore, these programs provide an important alternative to the traditional method of implementing male-modeled programs in female institutions (much like the PRW program studied by McCorkel); in addition, these programs fill an important gap in many institutions as a method for connecting with the outside community. These programs, as a smaller organization within a larger gendered

institution, become gendered in structure, in their mechanisms of control and surveillance, their impact on inmates, and in the end, in the forms of resistance which emerge. In particular, the perceptions of the inmates, staff, and administrators are likely to reflect traditional gender ideologies regarding change, rehabilitation, and benefits associated with these programs.

To date, the majority of research involving animal-based programs in prisons has focused on anecdotal accounts of administrative, staff, and limited inmate perceptions. Common areas of inquiry in prisons and prison programs, notably social control and resistance, have been excluded from previous research related to inmate-animal interactions. In addition, the gendered effects of these programs have not been adequately addressed. Considering these gaps in the research, I will focus my analysis on the mechanisms of control and resistance in these programs, and the manner in which these programs are gendered in both application and effect.



## **CHAPTER 3 - Research Method and Setting**

Several of the Kansas state correctional facilities have animal programs of one kind or another; two institutions serve as sites for this study. Ellsworth Correctional Facility (ECF), a medium security men's prison, has received dogs through an institutional partnership with Canine Assistance Rehabilitation Education and Services (CARES) since 1999. Both adult dogs and puppies are regularly assigned to inmate handlers with whom they learn more than sixty basic obedience commands, specialized commands associated with assistance work, and master an agility course. The dogs are then returned to CARES to learn specialized skills such as seizure alert and disability-related training, and are then placed with individuals with disabilities who match the dog's training. Those who receive the dogs return to ECF with their animals for a graduation ceremony in which the new owners meet the inmate dog handlers, an event which occurs with minimal prison staff (correctional officers) present.

Much like the CARES program at ECF, Topeka Correctional Facility (TCF) operates an advanced assistance dog training program in the minimum security facility with Kansas Specialty Dog Services (KSDS). This program differs from the CARES program, however, in that the participants are all volunteers, and the resources available to the program are more limited. Many of the items needed are provided by community and inmate donations, as well as through the "Pooches and Pals" organization – an inmate-led group of non-handler volunteers that sponsor fund raisers to help obtain supplies. In addition to the KSDS program, the "Blue Ribbon" program is available for those classified as medium or maximum custody, in which animals slated to be euthanized are sent by a local animal shelter to the prison for obedience training. The dogs that pass an obedience test given by a local trainer are then placed on a "do not destroy" list and returned to the Helping Hands Humane Society for adoption; nearly all find homes in a short period of time. These programs, both at ECF and TCF are supported by volunteers in the community and private donations. The only taxpayer money involved pays regular prison wages to the inmates, which amount to \$0.45 to \$1.05 per day; participation in the KSDS program is entirely voluntary – the training is in addition to their assigned work-release jobs.

I rely here on data collected by Dana Britton and myself during the summer and fall of 2005 at these two Kansas correctional facilities: Ellsworth Correctional Facility (ECF) and Topeka Correctional Facility (TCF) (see Table 1). The opportunity to conduct research on these programs was initiated by key administrative staff contacts within both institutions, facilitated by Dr. Britton's previous prison research, as well as ongoing shared academic research interests between Dr. Britton and administrators. Due to the lack of systematic studies regarding these programs, the research was designed as an exploratory study of all aspects of these programs. Data collection consisted of in-depth interviews which covered baseline data regarding the programs, administrator and staff perceptions about the programs, and inmate perceptions about the programs; additional data collection involved detailed observations of graduation ceremonies and interaction between handlers, staff, and the dogs (see Appendix A). The purpose of targeted questions was to provide background information regarding previous experience with dogs, additional work experiences in prison, and general information about daily program-specific routines. In addition, inmates were asked to provide, in their own words, their experiences as participants in the program, interaction with dogs, fellow inmates, and in the institution – all emphasizing the role of the dog training program. Interviews ranged from 15 minutes to an hour in length, and visits to the facilities lasted several hours, including tours, meeting staff, and viewing training and kennel facilities. Following transcription, all interviews and observation notes have been entered into NU\*DIST 6.0, a software package designed for use with qualitative research.

The process of data analysis in qualitative research often focuses on the emergence of relevant themes. During the coding process the baseline data was coded into relevant themes, and these themes were then used as markers for further analysis. These baseline themes include staff, community, and inmate perceptions, institutional effects, benefits, program development, and motivations. The divisions discussed in this thesis emerged as important themes discussed by staff, community members, and program participants regarding their daily interactions and actions within the correctional facility.

**Table 3.1 Dog Project interviews**

Program Participants (N=38)		
	N	%
Sex		
Male	18	47%
Female	20	53%
Race		
White	32	84%
African American	4	11%
Hispanic	1	3%
Native American	1	3%
Custody Level		
Medium or Maximum	24	63%
Minimum	14	37%
Training type		
Assistance	32	84%
"Blue Ribbon"	6	16%
Other interviews (N=35)		
Administrators and staff	7	
Recipients		
Focus group	26	
Individual recipients	2	

## **CHAPTER 4 - Findings**

Through analysis of the interviews with staff, inmates, and community members, several relevant themes emerged regarding the areas of interest discussed in this paper. In the following discussion, I will address these areas of social control and resistance, focusing on each through a gendered lens.

### **Social control**

For both men and women, social control is enacted in the dog training program in various ways. To begin with, admission into the programs requires that the inmate be disciplinary report (DR) free. Therefore, the majority of the inmates in these programs have already accepted institutional control in their daily lives, and have minimized their participation in ‘deviant’ or resistant activities and groups – that is, they are often viewed as “model” inmates. Two themes emerged in the context of social control: utilizing surveillance to control inmates through fear of losing the dog, and control over inmate participation.

### ***Surveillance***

The most common mechanism for controlling the dog trainers is the threat of losing their dog, and their position in the program, for disciplinary violations. Strict regulations and rules in the institution are augmented by the additional rules to which dog trainers must adhere – primarily access to various areas of the prison, proper control over the dog, and correct training methods for the dog. In the men’s institution, participation in the dog training program means that the dog is with the handler nearly 24 hours a day, and is expected to accompany the handler at all times, except for showering and visitation. This constant interaction with fellow inmates and staff members means that common puppy and dog raising practices create additional opportunities to obtain disciplinary reports (DR’s) due to institutional rule violations, or conflicts with staff and inmates. Program participants are keenly aware of the heightened surveillance on them from both staff and fellow inmates:

We’re in the limelight. I mean, there’s only 900 something inmates here, and eighteen dogs. You’re not only in the limelight with the staff, but also with the inmates.

*And what are they watching you for?*

Every little thing. They watch you for every little mistake that you're going to make. They watch for all the negative stuff.

*Would you say that's a negative aspect for guys who want to be in the program, that they're sort of going to be in the spotlight in that way?*

Right. If you have never been in the spotlight, and you want to be in it...it's a good program for it. But if you don't want to be in the spotlight, this is not the job for you (Male participant, CARES, ECF).

Handlers often referred to the difficulty in negotiating institutional rules, program rules, and basic interaction rules while caring for their dogs. Thus, participation in the program increased the control that the institution exercised on them, in that the fear of losing their dog can result in hyper-sensitivity to "messing-up," thus leading to 'good' behavior by handlers—including strict adherence to institutional rules, staff orders, and proper work ethic. This sense of being in the "limelight" stems from the increased surveillance of program participants by both staff and fellow inmates. Part of this increased surveillance for both men and women in these programs is the novelty of having dogs inside the institution, leading to increased interaction with correctional officers, administration, and fellow inmates. In particular, inmates in the CARES program often commented on the perception of the program by other inmates as being a place for "snitches and sex offenders"—labels that in fact keep potential participants from applying for this job. Although women in the KSDS and Blue Ribbon programs did experience similar labeling as "snitches," they did not face labeling as "sex offenders." However, female participants often faced the prospect of losing their dog for more minor offenses:

*And is there turnover in the program? Do people not stay for the whole year?*

Well, people get transferred to minimum security, and people get in fights or for some other reason lose their level, and then lose the job.

*If that happens, do you get one chance at that kind of thing?*

If you lose your level or if you get in a fight or anything.

*You're just out?*

You're out. It could be for some other infraction, like being at the window and signing to some girls in Seg... (Female participant, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

Being released as a handler from the Blue Ribbon program due to a disciplinary infraction was often a result of a minor offence, or the accumulation of many minor offences; in this instance, the participant mentions disciplinary infractions that involve using sign language to communicate with the women in the segregation unit. For the women in this program, surveillance is limited due to the location of the training facility, the lack of security cameras, and the limited rounds made by the correctional staff to the facility. Therefore, although violations such as occasional fighting are often visible, the majority of surveillance stems from the other handlers and inmates, although correctional staff are engaged in the surveillance/punishment process:

Right now it's been running pretty smooth, but awhile back...there's always...sometimes there's those rocky roads where you've got to call them in, and there's always the typical thing going where somebody calls in and says that this inmate doesn't have their t-shirt tucked in or something like that...you know, minor things (Male Staff, TCF).

As noted by this staff member, and by the participant above, these examples reflect the relatively minor offenses that can result in “write-ups,” leading to removal from the program. Although the form of surveillance is similar in both the men’s and women’s institutions, in that it is practiced by both correctional staff and fellow inmates, the primary difference between the two is the type of offences for which removal from the program is possible. Minor infractions such as un-tucked shirts, “signing,” and physical touching (such as hugging, and holding hands) were noted by staff and participants at TCF, while physical violence (fighting), rumors of abuse, and violations involving the movement of handlers around the institutional grounds were considered the most common offenses by staff and inmates at ECF:

I don’t know how many people you’ve interviewed, but this is a tough campus with a lot of dog lovers here, and if you don’t treat the dog right...you’re not going to gain any respect out of them.

*It sounds like it might cause you some trouble.*

Oh, it can cause you some trouble.

*So, if that happens...if you’ve got somebody blowing you off and not doing what they are supposed to be doing, then they would be washed out of the program?*

They'll take care of themselves, either the inmates or the staff will take care of them (Male participant, CARES, ECF).

I had an inmate that was one of my good handlers come to me crying, because he was being accused of molesting his dog by the other inmates, and he said "I have to get out." He was crying, and he wasn't one of those weak people that you expected to cry, but he was very emotional and upset, because he was being accused of something (Male staff, ECF).

The heightened surveillance on the dog handlers functions, as noted in the first of these two quotes, as a controlling mechanism for those within the program to "police" their own ranks. If handlers were perceived to be mistreating their dog, or not following the program guidelines for training, they would often be "wash out," or they would be "taken care of." When handlers described this process, the emphasis was always on the stress that accompanied the program – thus new handlers would either "wash out" from frustration, or they would be removed through pressure from staff or inmates. This was indeed the case in the account told in the second quote. Here, the perception that the handler was molesting the dog (meaning abuse in this context – often associated with a handler being "heavy handed" with their dog) created a stressful situation for the handler and resulted in his "washing out" of the program.

This high level of surveillance, of being in the "limelight" is present for both men and women in these programs, and it functions in similar fashion for both institutions. In particular, the likelihood of removal of the dog from the handler, and the handler from the program, therefore combines to serve as a mechanism for controlling the inmate's behavior. For the compounds hosting the CARES and KSDS programs, there is added incentive for non-participant inmates to 'police' their own behavior, the behavior of the handlers, and the behavior of inmates around them, as the punishment of removing the dog from a handler can affect the housing unit as a whole.

It became clear during these interviews that the combination of increased surveillance, and the threat of losing a dog, contributed to a very real sense of fear and paranoia on the part of the handlers; the incident noted by the ECF staff member was not the first, or last, story of this type. The result was that daily interactions were often limited to fellow program participants,

staff, and “safe” inmates—in the case of living units fearing removal of a dog, this often resulted in high cohesion among the inmates, and thus group adherence to rules, staff orders, and program rules. However, if the living unit suspected a resident handler of “bad behavior,” then the surveillance over that handler often increased, yet again resulting in increased levels of fear.

### ***Control over participation***

For participants in the Blue Ribbon program, control over the inmates also took the form of regulations regarding the length of time these women could participate in the programs. Medium and maximum security level prisoners at TCF are required to change jobs every year, due to the warden’s belief that this will limit staff-inmate bonding, and management staff are required to change positions every two years – rules that do not exist at Ellsworth. For the women, this forced movement caused personal angst and led to a lack of leadership in the program:

*Do you have a lot of people who have a lot of experience in the program?*

Not right now because a lot of them had to rotate out. It breaks their heart to have to rotate out. The lady you just interviewed and I have been there the longest of the people that are there now, we try to help the new ones that come in. (Female participant, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

I almost cried when they told me that I had to quit. For a long time they didn't institute the year at a job rotation thing, and then all of the sudden it was instituted...and I just didn't want to leave. It was the longest six months of my life (Female participant, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

These two accounts by “senior” handlers highlight the training and organizational difficulties faced by the women in the Blue Ribbon program. The control over access to the program for female inmates is made more difficult by the constant restructuring of the program according to the current participants; a common fear among these women was the caliber of program members, and their danger to the dogs and the potential loss of the program. Staff members associated with the Blue Ribbon program noted similar concerns, but maintained that the forced



movements in job assignments were considered best for the women by the warden, and were therefore to be continued.

For both men and women in these programs, control over participation creates a sense of privilege among those involved, and thus provides incentive to join the program for those not already members. However, this also acts as a mechanism for control over the participants because it provides the institution with a ‘reward’ that can be taken away. In addition, a specific purpose is served regarding women’s participation in the programs at TCF. By regulating the amount of time members are allowed to participate in jobs in general, and the dog training programs in particular, the prison reaffirms the control over the daily lives of these women, their occupational options, and ultimately controls their emotional bonds to fellow inmates, staff, and their dogs. Thus, the institutional control over these women mirrors the larger societal control over their daily lives, including labor participation and emotions.

Control over participation for the men primarily took the form of forced interactions with staff through required “check-ins.” Scheduled meetings with program administrators are held weekly, with a monthly report due that detailed the dog’s training progress, habits and vices, and special concerns of the handler. This increased contact with staff contributes to the labeling of handlers as “snitches,” and was noted as a deterrent to many inmates due to the negative status held by inmates accused of undue familiarity with correctional staff, and the potential violence against those individuals. This also served as a mechanism of control over the participants, as well as fellow inmates in that many inmates were perceived to opt out of participation in the program to avoid the potential problems that they might face. Thus, while participation in the dog training program was overwhelmingly viewed as a special assignment by the women at TCF, the men at ECF were faced with the decision between participation in what was also considered a special assignment, and the negative stereotypes that were often assigned to the participants.

## **Resistance**

Institutional control over these inmates is often directly linked to perceptions of relative freedom. Their positions as dog handlers allow for increased movement in the facility, and in the case of the Blue Ribbon program, working in the absence of direct supervision by guards and cameras. Control over the daily activities in the programs (training, feeding, bathing, exercise,

etc.) is left in the hands of the inmates, and often contributes to this sense of freedom. As with the nature of this institution, however, the 'freedom' granted these inmates is tenuous, and can often result in increased levels of control, surveillance, and punishments if they are perceived to have violated a rule:

It's almost like they treat us...not better or different...but we get by with a lot of stuff.

You know, being able to move around when we want...going to lunch early and nobody says anything about us, even if it's our day off. But, when something bad happens, like an officer walked down awhile back and smelled smoke...and oh, my! We all got strip searched, we all got patted down for days and days and days and days... (Female participant, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

Although she begins this quote with the statement that participation in the dog training program grants the handlers a measure of freedom, the acknowledgment that this privilege can be revoked is clear. In many ways, the resistance/control dialectic between staff and handlers reflected common staff/prisoner power relations within the institution. What became clear during the interviews, however, was that even in the presence of increased surveillance and often invasive punishment, the program participants found ways to successfully resist the control over them, despite the potential for disciplinary action being taken against them.

### ***Resistance through program rules***

Participants in both the men's and women's institutions have similar mechanisms for resistance against correctional officers. In particular, inmates are granted a level of control over the staff by enforcing proper training for the dogs, effectively resisting their subordinate position by temporarily engaging in interactions in which the correctional staff must abide by the rules of the program.

I had an officer who has been here for awhile, he threw turkey out on the floor and said that it was a dog treat. I had to tell him that these dogs cannot have people food at all...he just didn't understand, and he felt terrible...he left and was just real rattled by it. He came back about 15 minutes later and he said that he felt really bad for getting the dog in trouble. I said that I understood that he didn't know, but the thing is that he should always ask (Female participant, KSDS, TCF).

I won't let certain guards pet my dog for the simple fact that they've always got food in their hands, and they'll try to purposely stick it in the dog's face. That's not cool. But, most of the staff, they're cool with it. The only thing that I don't like is that they can just come and grab the dog whenever they want to take the dog, and I can't say nothing (Male participant, CARES, ECF).

As noted by the CARES participant, these acts of resistance against the power structure are temporary and limited, because staff ultimately has the ability to override the inmate's authority. It is important to note, however, that the majority of the staff and participant interviews reflected that staff at both institutions are supportive of the program, with correctional officers sometimes contributing to the ability of the participants to resist by chastising their fellow staff members for not following the dog program rules. For instance, an incident in which a correctional officer was bitten by a Blue Ribbon dog occurred during hours in which participants are not at the kennel – a violation of program rules for both staff and inmates. Removal of the dog from the program was met with outcry from both staff and inmates, and ridicule of the bitten officer from fellow staff. According to the handler of this dog:

All the officers were making fun of him, saying that he was trying to get workman's comp. I had captains trying to get that dog to stay! So they know what he's all about! But still, the dog had to go off with the police, and he got his day off work (Female participant, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

This handler clearly felt that staff rallied behind her when her dog was removed from the facility, with staff members directing their anger towards a fellow correctional officer rather than expressing solidarity among their own ranks, even to the extent that the handler noted the emotional support that several staff members gave her while she cried at the loss of her dog. Thus, resistance by handlers against and in defense of program rules can often include staff as well, even if this resistance is, as in this case, ultimately futile.

### *Resistance through training*

Resistance in the dog programs also takes the form of training disputes. The primary training guidelines for the CARES program focused on correction-based training methods using choke chains; those used by the Blue Ribbon and KSDS programs primarily relied on treat training and a modified form of correction-based training using “puppy” collars that made noise rather than traditional choke collars. The use of the ‘correction’ method associated with the traditional choke chain is widely resisted by participants in the programs, argued by some to resemble abuse. For the inmates that did resist the correction-based method, their status as handlers was often in question, and occasionally challenged by other participants and staff members:

Yeah, people are like “You’re a softy,” and well... I don’t like choking Rocky, it’s not really humane. It’s still a form of abuse, regardless if it’s for the purpose of training the dog to do certain commands – it is still a form of abuse. I wish there was a different way... (Male participant, CARES, ECF).

This participant’s resistance against the traditional training methods, perceived as abuse, resulted in other handlers, and some staff members, questioning his ability as a handler. Male handlers also faced having their masculinity questioned as well as their reliability as a handler – the argument was indeed made that being “heavy handed” was often viewed as being more effective than being a “softy,” though most associated with being the latter. This questioning of masculinity must be set against the previously mentioned label of being a “sex offender;” the process of resisting the formal training guidelines could thus cause additional, potentially dangerous, problems for the handler from fellow inmates. On the other hand, if the handler was perceived as being too heavy-handed with their dog, they faced potentially violent retribution from fellow inmates. The result of having to navigate these various labels and perceptions of “proper” masculinity was a source of tension for these handlers. Thus, many of the handlers in CARES chose to resist the traditional correction-based method by using library resources to create a combination method of traditional correction and alternative, often pack-based, training. In this manner, their masculinity could still be maintained by adapting their training methods to reflect their status as “alpha dog” to their own dog, and occasionally to the group of dogs as a whole. In addition, their knowledge regarding multiple training methods often increased their

status among their fellow trainers, as well as among staff and the larger inmate population, thus yet again protecting their masculinity through adoption of a leadership role.

Resistance to correction-based methods was a particular issue with women in the KSDS and Blue Ribbon programs:

I got angry with him...but all I could do was sit down and count to ten, because I refuse to be anything else but loving to him.

*Well, and it sounds like they need that.*

They need that, but sometimes they need sternness, they need strength, and someone who can just put them down. Sometimes they need to be put down and stopped.

*Like the alpha roll?*

Yes, or rough them up like their momma would have done. Pick them up by their jowls, don't hurt them, and just scruff them. I want to do it sometimes to him, but I can't.

*Why not?*

Because I don't know what's happened to him in his life (Female participant, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

This comment highlights two important differences in the motivations for resistance between the men and women. First is the connection of training and parenting; in this case, the implication is the combination of motherly affection and gentle sternness with sharp discipline. Participants in the CARES program more often focused on the need for discipline rather than affection, and did not connect training and parenting as often. Women in both KSDS and Blue Ribbon, however, regularly connected the importance of nurturing both puppies and rescued dogs, often directly resisting more harsh training techniques, such as leash correction, and instead utilizing reward-based techniques. The emphasis for both KSDS and Blue Ribbon was on “raising” the puppies and dogs, rather than merely training them.

Second, the recognition of the possibility of past abuse was particularly apparent in interviews with KSDS and Blue Ribbon participants, and often tied to personal histories of abuse. For one handler, the dog training program provided “a safe place to heal from extreme abuse that lasted over a period of about 35 years” (Female Participant, KSDS, TCF). The connection that these women make to their own histories of past abuse and the experiences of their dogs was not limited to the handlers:

I think it helps them as far as they know what it feels like to be abused, and they don't want to see the animals be abused...they don't want to see the animals neglected. For the most part, I've seen where if there's a thunderstorm out, and we've had dogs that loud noises bother them...they've asked to go down and sit with the dog to keep it calm. Because you know you've been abused, and you don't want to see someone else, or you don't want to see something else abused...so they're more compassionate in regards to the animals, which is a good thing (Male staff, Blue Ribbon, TCF).

Staff on several occasions noted the bond between the women and their dogs, and noted the compassion that was shown by these women to often injured and frightened dogs. This connection between the common experiences of the program participants and their charges was not often made among men in the CARES program. Furthermore, when this connection was made, it was treated as a potential obstacle in training, and never accompanied by personal tales of abuse. Women in the KSDS and Blue Ribbon programs were acutely aware of signs of past abuse in their dogs, occasionally relating their own stories of abuse, thus personalizing their interaction with their dogs. Rather than viewing past abuse as potentially detrimental to the training process, handlers in the women's programs instead assumed that the majority of dogs had experienced some form of mistreatment, and adjusted their individual and group training sessions accordingly, again utilizing additional resources, often disregarding, and thus resisting, the program training manuals.

### ***Personal resistance***

The ability to resist the mechanisms of control in the prison system is difficult, particularly when resistance is perceived as actions taken against those in power. Often, resistance in correctional institutions is viewed in the context of physical and structural resistance, such as fighting, "mouthing off," and filing complaints against officers. In the dog training programs, these forms of resistance against officers and fellow inmates will lead to removal of the participant from the program; therefore, resistance must take a different form. For participants in these programs, resistance against the structure of the institution is reflected in their appropriation of program rules and training curriculum in a manner that bestows a sense of autonomy to the participants. Because this form of resistance is permitted, and even promoted as

a sign of responsibility (as in the case of adapting training methods to accommodate a difficult or frightened dog), it helps to foster another form of resistance – one that occurs at a more intimate level for these participants. Specifically, resistance against institutional control over the identity, personality, and sense of worth of the participants emerged as a major theme during these interviews, demonstrating the impact of the program on the institution, the community, and the handlers.

The participants in these programs are placed in a unique situation, in which their status as ‘prisoner’ is countered by their status as ‘caregiver/handler’. Statements made by staff regarding their ‘trust’ in these men and women, and community member comments on the transition of their perceptions of participants from dangerous, selfish inmates to responsible, caring trainers reflect this modified status. Tied to this change in status is the ability of the handlers to successfully resist the effects of the institution on the “self.” A primary mechanism for changing staff and self-perceptions of and towards inmates occurs during graduation ceremonies, in which handlers and dog recipients are allowed to interact. At Ellsworth, these ceremonies occur within the prison walls, placing community members in the inmate environment:

I was worried about going, because I had not been to a prison. I was afraid that maybe they would be looking at us in ways that I would be uncomfortable with, and I wasn’t prepared for how my dog was going to be excited about going. I really saw the connection that he had with not just his trainer, but with the other guys, too. He had definitely bonded with a lot of the men there, and I wasn’t ready for that experience, for him to just want to go be with those guys. It was awesome, I was so impressed with the handler, and he was so happy to share with me all that he’d learned, and he was very helpful (CARES recipient).

This particular fear of entering the prison environment, and being at the mercy of inmates, was an experience shared by many of the CARES recipients. The ensuing interaction, however, countered these community members’ fears with an experience that helped foster a new perception of the handlers, and allowed the handlers to continue to resist the negative stereotypes associated with their status as inmates. The impact of these programs on staff, inmates, and the community are clearly demonstrated during the graduation ceremonies. Participants in KSDS

have occasionally participated in these ceremonies, while CARES handlers have graduations every few months. Although Blue Ribbon dogs do not have graduations, the popularity of this program is evident in the speed with which the dogs are adopted, often the very day that they return to the shelter.

Inmates in all programs had either participated in the graduation ceremonies, or had heard about them from other participants; thus, the graduation was argued by the participants to be the pivotal moment, and often has a profound effect on those attending. Comments from different perspectives demonstrate this:

It feels good. I haven't been out in society in what...4, 4 1/2 years? At the graduation ceremony the program coordinator was telling me to get out there and talk to them...She told me that she trusts us, or she wouldn't be with us. So, I finally started talking to the other puppy raisers...and it made me feel good, 'cause everybody wants to talk about the dog program...but not about us...they said that we all did a wonderful job...they make you feel good, 'cause they acknowledge it. It makes us feel human again (Female participant, KSDS, TCF).

Here, a handler in the KSDS program speaks of trust, a sense of worth, and the very powerful feeling of being “human again.” This momentary relief from the institution, and the role of inmate, allows participants to fully identify and interact with non-inmates as ‘handlers’ and ‘trainers’, perhaps for the first time during their participation in the program. Resistance here occurs through the embracing of the status as a ‘handler’ rather than an ‘inmate’. In addition, these interactions clearly help to counter the popular perceptions of inmates promoted by mass media:

*What's it like for the people who receive the dog, meeting you guys [at graduation]?*

When I first came in, I was scared to death, I'm not going to lie. You see a prison on a TV show and you think “Oh my God!,” and then you come in here and it's a little different.

*So you think that they're initially scared?*

Yeah.

*And then when you meet them?*



They've made comments to me "Hey, you're crying!," and I say "Hey, whether I'm in a prison or not, I've got a soft spot in my heart for this.." The rumors are that guys in prison are tough, that they don't care...all they care about is themselves...it's not true. 'Cause I can't help but cry.

*So, they're surprised that you're emotional.*

It's a good cry, don't get me wrong. It's a good thing, it keeps me going (Male participant, CARES, ECF).

The clear differences between the experiences of these participants, and the initial perceptions and expectations of them by correctional staff, community members, and even fellow inmates, was noted by several participants. As demonstrated in this quote, this sense of "humanity," both in interactions and emotions felt by the handlers, and the obvious contradiction to popular belief regarding inmates that it enables, was indeed most apparent at these graduation ceremonies. Male participants noted that their emotional resistance, often through crying and acts of compassion and empathy, helped to further the bond they developed with their dog, and prompted a re-evaluation of the nature of inmates by correctional staff and community members. In the context of their status as handlers, these emotional displays did not appear to question their masculinity, and instead appeared to strengthen their status as handlers.

They get tears in their eyes...and for criminals who have been down for years, and in front of other inmates...to get tears in their eyes, that is just destroying all the walls (begins to tear up). Because that is just not considered appropriate behavior, and that means that I'm making some progress. I had one particular father that got up and talked about how his nine-year-old was in a wheelchair and could barely move at all, wouldn't respond, wouldn't talk, wouldn't make any noises, but now that he has his dog he's talking to the dog... he is trying to talk, he is touching the dog...and the father was just in tears talking about how much the dog was doing good – and that one stuck with me (Male staff, ECF).

I thought that it was an amazing experience; it was really valuable to me. I just think that you have to be there and go through it to really understand. It will be hard for me to go home and say why it was so amazing, but it was. It was really neat to see how the guy

who worked with Maddie was so attached, he almost immediately started crying, and it was really shocking. I just didn't expect to see that attachment – it was really neat (CARES recipient).

These two accounts present a glimpse of the successful resistance by these inmates, and the changes in perceptions that it fosters. The tearful account by the ECF staff member was a breach in the traditional perception of inmates as selfish, hardened individuals – a belief noted by staff in both facilities, and often assigned to non-program inmates. In particular, the perceptions of hypermasculinity that were often assigned to male inmates was countered even more by the emotional expressions of the male handlers, further distancing them from the typical identity of their counterparts. For the CARES recipient, the amazement at the strong bond between the handler and their dog, and their “valuable” experience at the ceremony again hints at a successful resistance on the part of the handlers. In the course of the interview process we were given similar accounts in both institutions, and much like the two quotes above, these interviews were often marked by displays of emotions by correctional staff, community members, and program participants. It was clear that this ability of the handlers to resist the negative perceptions and identity presented to, and often forced on them as inmates, was strengthened by their experiences in the graduation ceremonies. Individuals who had not yet participated in a graduation ceremony often recounted stories told to them by inmates and staff members, again highlighting the often emotional, and surprisingly open, atmosphere.

During our research, we observed a CARES graduation ceremony at Ellsworth, and the importance of these events became quite clear. As we entered the visitation room, located behind two steel security gates, the handlers took their seats along the back wall of the room, with their current dogs at their sides. CARES dog recipients, with their new dogs, seated themselves approximately 10 feet across from the handlers. With the exception of the program coordinator, no prison staff were present inside the visiting room. The graduation began with the handler's introducing themselves, their current dog, and talking about what the program means to them. During these introductions, several of the graduated dogs recognize their handlers, often barking and whining in excitement. As the CARES recipients began to stand and introduce themselves, the emotional aspects of this event, so often mentioned by inmates and non-inmates, became clear. Recipients of the dogs began to cry, as did several of the handlers—many of the

men began to offer comfort to their fellow handlers by hugging them and openly crying with them. Soon, the dog recipients and handlers were interacting, with no physical space between them, and continued to do so for the remainder of the graduation. The end of the ceremony was marked with giving the handlers whose dogs had graduated certificates recognizing their achievement; the appreciation of the recipients, and of the CARES director was stated clearly: “Thank you is so little a word, and a piece of paper so little a gesture.”

These accounts by individuals involved in these programs, and the interactions we observed during the graduation, illustrate an important process of resistance and change that occurs both inside and outside of the prison walls. Much like the handler’s account of being treated like a “human” again, resistance against the dehumanizing experience of prison life took many forms for these individuals. It became clear that a sense of worth, previously stripped during the incarceration process, was now being coaxed back into these individuals.

## **CHAPTER 5 - Discussion and Conclusion**

This research provides insight in to the social control/resistance dialectic that exists both inside and outside prison walls, and the process of change that can occur through successful internal and external resistance. The experiences of these men and women provide a new perspective on the traditional prison context; one which, furthermore, may be applied with an additional, or expanded, gendered focus.

For the men and women in these programs, the control over their bodies originates in the very purpose of the prison institution. Privileges concerning possessions, visitation, dress code, time spent outdoors, and movement within compound are all examples of the ability to control inmates through limiting their “freedom;” the prison sentence is the beginning of the stripping of liberty (freedom) as punishment. Foucault’s “micro-physics of power” are clearly enacted in the lives of program participants through control over the participation, training, movement, and interactions permitted by these men and women. In addition, the restrictions faced by the women in the Blue Ribbon program demonstrate the gendered nature of this control—issues of familiarity with prison staff were viewed differently in the men’s institution, where staff-inmate interactions were promoted through required “check-ins” with the program manager. This control over the behavior and interactions of the women in the Blue Ribbon program highlights a distinct connection between the expected behavior of women outside the walls, and the forced compliance with these expectations within them. The perception of “being watched” more often than other inmates also demonstrates Foucault’s concept of panoptic surveillance; instead of merely utilizing the staff and electronic surveillance methods, the inmates in both institutions found themselves under constant watch by fellow inmates as well, due to their interactions with and possession of the dog. The power of this surveillance, of being in the “limelight,” is a mechanism of control over the inmates, and serves as a force of cohesion among program participants, staff, and regular inmates—creating an “us versus them” mentality of programs supporters vs. non-supporters, though this is more pronounced in the men’s institution. The sense of fear and paranoia noted by handlers contributed to the control the institutions exercised over them, primarily in reaffirming the importance of adherence to institutional rules and staff

orders. In addition, the offenses for which the women in KSDS and the Blue Ribbon programs were in danger of being caught doing, and removed from the program for, reflect the gender differences in prison disciplinary write-ups: staff primarily focused on “girlfriends,” dress code violations, and unauthorized movement in the complex as the most common offenses – all threats to traditional ideas of “femininity.” In sharp contrast, the men were watched for fighting and paraphernalia violations (drugs, cigarettes, etc.) (Britton 2003). For both men and women participating in these programs, control over their ‘docile’ bodies often took the form of increased numbers of strip searches and cavity searches—following each on-site graduation, the men are given a full cavity search, while the women in the Blue Ribbon program face strip searches if staff suspect smoking violations.

Resistance is possible, however, for the participants in these programs. While the prison structure unquestionably constrains and controls behavior, the ability to resist the training procedures and staff control over the dogs demonstrates the possibility of overt, indeed program-supported, resistance through action. Thus, the control over the bodies of these inmates is tempered through increased freedom of movement and interaction within the walls of the prison. This accommodation-resistance process reflects the discussions of Goffman, Weitz, and Foucault regarding the placement and mechanisms of resistance within a system of power. Thus, how resistance is engaged in and defined by the men and women in these programs is related to the system of power within the correctional institution. For example, the women in the Blue Ribbon program experience this process through the decreased level surveillance they experience while working in the facility-controlled on-site kennel; a “critical space” similar to that discussed by McCorkel, or a “free space” per Goffman. In addition, the adherence to program regulations enables the handlers to resist their subordinate status as inmates, and instead participate as trainers.

Control over the body, and resistance by the body, are important aspects to this study. However, the control and resistance of the ‘soul’ is also critical in this analysis. As previously discussed, the resistance of the ‘self’ and the ‘soul’ engages resistance against internalized social control, through “free spaces,” “critical spaces,” boundary maintenance, and minor acts of resistance and deviance. This resistance is difficult, however, due to the increased control that is enacted on individuals attempting to resist. For inmates in general, and participants in these programs in particular, the form of resistance must therefore change in order to ensure protection

against increased sanctions. Successful resistance becomes internal, firmly placed in the ‘soul’ and the ‘self’. In this regard, the relationship between resistance, power, and accommodation requires further investigation into the “sociology of the person,” as suggested by Cahill (1998), due to the complicated, conflicted, and often disputed nature of the individual’s sense of autonomy, identity, and personality, and their perceived social being.

The concepts of “free space” and “critical space” take on a new context for participants in these programs. Although physical examples do exist in Goffman’s and McCorkel’s works, an entirely new space is created for the ‘soul’ and the ‘self’ through interaction with the dogs. Both Goffman and McCorkel note the importance of limited surveillance in the construction of these spaces, allowing the inmates to be their own wo/man. Surveillance, however, is not benign in the context of social control—it is directly tied with the threat of judgment. Therefore, Foucault, Goffman, and McCorkel are not merely presenting arguments on surveillance; they are instead analyzing the processes of judgment and sanctioning of individuals, specifically prisoners, through the social control mechanism of surveillance. Interaction with the dogs in general, and the inmate’s individual dog in particular, creates a new ‘space’ by providing a personal relationship between handler and dog that is free of judgment and sanction. Participants in these programs cried, hugged, and confided in their dogs—all without fear of judgment, sanction, or reprisal from their companion. Similar interactions with fellow inmates or staff are not permitted in institutions in which physical contact and emotional ‘weakness’ are forbidden and dangerous, and ‘secrets’ are often publicly displayed. Unlike the human-bound “free space” and “critical space” of Goffman and McCorkel, this internal, emotional space cannot be breached—the dogs do not judge, do not tell secrets, and always return the affection. The dominant identity for the inmate through this interaction becomes that of trainer and caregiver. In addition, these actions are indeed socially acceptable, and are often noted by staff and fellow participants as a reflection of how strong the bond is between dog and handler, and how well the participant is doing in their ‘rehabilitation’. Resistance, therefore, is embodied in the bond and interaction between dog and handler; the ‘self’ and the ‘soul’ are granted sanctuary from judgment and sanction, thereby allowing the individual to resist the institution, and the forced identity of “inmate.”

I have been preparing for it this whole time, for him to go, and it makes it easier when I know the kind of dog that he is. He is going to give to somebody...freedom from themselves. I know that sounds kind of weird, but we're locked up inside a fence, those

people are locked up in their own bodies. I am glad that I can give them some freedom to live (Female participant, KSDS, TCF).

Although she speaks of the impact of the program on the lives of the recipients, the interaction between the dog and the handler provides a space in which they become ‘free’ as well. The unconditional love from the dog, and the ability to confide in and create a bond free of sanction within an otherwise “total” institution provides the space in which a new sense of ‘self’ develops, in contrast to the institutionally imposed “self” of an “inmate.” This ‘free soul/self’ is further nurtured by the positive interactions and perceptions of the community, staff, and fellow inmates. In developing these counter-identities in the prison, the dog training programs effectively undermine aspects of the control of the institution on these individuals; allowing them “freedom from themselves” through freedom from the forced identity of “inmate,” “deviant,” and “delinquent.”

## **Conclusion**

This thesis was designed to present salient themes of social control, resistance, and social change in the lives of inmates involved in the dog training programs. Differences between the men’s and women’s institutions demonstrated the gendered nature of the institution in the development, application, and participation in the dog training programs, particularly in the mechanisms of control and resistance. Further, the argument has been made that resistance in prison cannot be confined to overt, or indeed covert, actions. Instead, a theoretical approach to resistance should also include the resistance of the “soul” and the “self” – together, they form the sense of self, and perhaps the very embodiment of autonomy.

Further analysis is needed to address additional gendered aspects in these programs and their institutions. As research on these programs increases, as well as that in the HAB, the ability to further understand the benefits, challenges, and the impact of these programs on the community, institution, and individuals will become clearer. In particular, research aimed at establishing a stronger connection between recidivism rates and program participation would benefit the correctional system in providing a new form of rehabilitation. Though outside the scope of this thesis, continuation of analysis and data collection is planned—with a similar

emphasis on control, resistance, change, and gendered benefits/challenges involved in the development and participation in these programs.



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## **Appendix A - Interview Schedules**

### **An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections**

Dana M. Britton, Ph.D., Primary Investigator  
Department of Sociology  
Kansas State University

NOTE: I anticipate that interviews will be relatively open-ended, as dictated by the exploratory nature of this project. I have provided questions below to indicate the nature of the topics to be covered.

## Administrator interviews

### **Topic A: Baseline and administrative data on the program(s).**

Can you tell me something about the history of the dog program? How did it come to be established here? How long has it been in operation? During that time, who has been in charge of the program? How is the program funded?

Tell me about the basics of the program. Where do the dogs come from? How long are they here at the institution? How are they housed and trained while they are here? Where do they go after that?

Can you tell me something about the work programs you have here generally? Would you say that there are enough jobs for inmates? In your opinion, what are the best kinds of work programs? Do you think the dog program falls into that category? What kinds of programs do you think inmates prefer? Would those be the same kind that you would prefer to operate? What do you think work programs should accomplish?

### **Topic B: Effects of the program on stakeholders**

How do inmates come to participate in the dog program/what are the requirements for entry? How long do inmates remain in the program? What is the curriculum? Can you describe a typical day for an inmate in the program?

Is the program popular (i.e., is there more inmate demand than there are slots in the program)? Is there a particular type of inmate that you think does well in the program? Can you give me a success story of which you are particularly proud? Have there been dropouts from the program? Under what circumstances did these occur?

Tell me what effect you think the program has on inmates. Would you say that it improves their lives? What about their prospects after release? How do you think the program affects inmates who do not participate?

How do you think line staff (correctional officers) view the program? I know that officers sometimes resist new programs in institutions – can you tell me how they felt about the program when it was first established? How did you deal with any resistance? How do you think staff feel now? Have there been any tensions among staff regarding the existence of the program? How have these been resolved?

How do you think the existence of this program has affected relationships between inmates and staff? Would you say that relationships have improved, deteriorated, or has there been no effect?

What about the effect of this program on your institution? What's it like, on a day-to-day basis, having dogs in the institution and in inmate housing units? Do you think it's been a benefit to the institution? In what way? Are inmates in the program less likely to cause problems in the

institution? Has the program caused any problems in the day to day running of the institution? How have these been resolved?

Finally, I know that one of the most important aspects of prison administration is the relationship between the institution and the community. What effect do you think this program has had on your relationships with the community? Do you see inmate work programs as tools for improving community relations?

### **Topic C. Future/closing issues**

Is your perception of the program positive or negative over all? What do you see as the most positive aspect of the program? If you had to identify a negative aspect, what would it be?

Would you like to see the program continued? Expanded (or scaled down)? If you would like to see it expanded, what would be the challenges to making that happen?

## Staff interviews

### **Topic A. Baseline information**

How long have you worked in this institution? Is this the first prison in which you've worked? If not, where were you before this? How did you come to be at this institution?

Can you tell me a little bit about how you feel about working with inmates? What do you think the main challenges are, on a day-to-day basis, in your work with inmates? Do you get any satisfaction from your work with inmates?

Tell me something about the work programs here. What kinds of jobs are inmates assigned? Do you think that there's enough work to keep inmates busy?

### **Topic B. The dog program**

What contact have you had with the dog program here? What contact do staff generally have with inmates in the program?

Tell me what the rules are about what the inmates can do with the dogs/where they can be in the facility, etc. Do you think these rules are generally followed? Can you think of any instances in which they were not?

What kinds of challenges does it present, on a day-to-day basis, having dogs in the facility and in inmate housing units? Does dealing with the dogs make your job more difficult in any way? Is there any way in which it makes your job easier?

Are staff provided with any special training that relates to managing inmates in the dog program or managing the dogs themselves? Would you like to see such training? What would you tell a new officer about how to work with inmates in the program?

How do you feel about the program? Do you think inmates should be able to participate in this kind of work program? Has having this program in the facility affected your view of inmates in any way?

Tell me what effect you think the program has on inmates. Would you say that it improves their lives? What about their prospects after release? How do you think the program affects inmates who do not participate?

### **Topic C. Future/closing issues**

Is your perception of the program positive or negative over all? What do you see as the most positive aspect of the program? If you had to identify a negative aspect, what would it be?

Would you like to see the program continued? Expanded (or scaled down)? Any changes that you think might make sense?

## Participant interviews

### **Topic A: Baseline information**

Did you have dogs or other pets before you came to prison? Did you grow up with dogs and did you like them? Did you have any experience training dogs before you came?

Since you've been here, what work programs have you participated in? (Using this list) Tell me what your perceptions of these assignments has been. What has been your favorite work assignment? What job did you like least? What makes a "good" job in prison? If you could choose any work assignment, what would be the most important factor to you in making that choice?

### **Topic B: Dog program basics**

How long have you been participating in the dog program? How did you get into the program? Are you a primary handler at the moment? How many dogs have you had? What breeds were they?

Take me through a typical day in the program. Tell me how you spend your time and what you do during a day in which you're training a dog. What are the rules about where dogs can be in the facility and what they can do?

Let's talk about the curriculum for the dogs. What do you teach them? How do you do this? Are there times that the dogs simply will not do what you have trained them to do? How do you handle this? What have you learned about what it takes to train a dog successfully? What are some particularly poor strategies?

Tell me about what you see as some of your success stories in this program. Describe a challenge you had with a particular dog. How did you overcome that challenge? Other than the specifics of how to train a dog, what else have you learned about dogs in this program?

How does it feel to have to give up a dog? How long do you typically wait until you get another dog? How do you feel about starting over with a new dog?

Have you been through a graduation ceremony with a dog? Tell me about this. Have you even met someone who received one of your dogs? What did that dog do for the person? How did it feel to meet that person?

### **Topic C: Outsiders and effects**

Now think for a moment about other people who are in the program with you. What do you think it takes for a man/woman to be successful in this program? Is there a particular type of man/woman who is likely to succeed in the program? Would you say that there's any type of person who would not be likely to be successful?

Tell me what it's like to have a dog with you 24/7 in this institution. How do other inmates on your housing unit feel about having the dogs around? Would you say their reaction is mostly positive, or negative? Have there been any instances in which having the dogs around has created tension between you and other inmates? How was that resolved?

How do you think COs feel about having the dogs around? Do you think they treat you any differently because you're in the program? Do you think having a dog has affected your relationship with staff in any way? And is that positive or negative, do you think?

### **Topic D: Closing and future**

Tell me how you feel about being in this program. How do you think it has affected you? What do you think you've learned? Do you think this program has made your life in this institution better or has it made it worse, on balance? Are there any negative aspects to your participation?

Compared to other work programs you've been a part of, how would you rate this one? Why? If you could make any changes in this program, what would they be? Why would you make these changes? What are the challenges, if any, to implementing these changes now?



If you were a prison administrator, would you support programs like this one? Why or why not?  
If you were an administrator who was trying to “sell” a program like this one to the taxpayers, what would you say?

How long have you been here? Is this your first sentence to prison? How long do you have left to serve?

Do you think this program has prepared you in any way for life outside prison? Tell me how. Will the work you did here be connected to the work you hope to do once you leave here? Do you think participating in this program has changed you in any way?

## **Appendix B - Informed Consent Statement – Administrators and Staff**

### **A. General Information**

**1. Name of Researcher:** Dana M. Britton, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Kansas State University

**2. Title of Study:** An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections

**3. Objectives of Study:** This study will examine the experiences of prison administrators, staff and inmates with dog training programs.

**4. Description and purpose of procedures:** This part of the research consists of interviews with inmates, staff, and administrators. This interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. During that time I will ask you questions about the dog training program here at the institution and your experiences with the program. With your permission, I will tape record this interview so that I may use this information in my research. If you would rather not be tape recorded, I will take notes during the interview. What I hope to do is to find out what kinds of effects, both positive and negative, these programs have on participants and on prisons.

**5. Use of results/security of data:** I will use data collected in this project in published reports of the research in professional journals. You will never be identified by name in any published report. I will maintain signed consent forms and interview materials separately. All interviews will be identified only by code number (rather than by name), and consent forms will be destroyed in three years. Only I and my student assistant will have access to these interviews.

**6. The risks and discomforts are minimal. They may include:** Strictly the use of your time is required. There is no physical risk involved, and your behavior or responses will not be manipulated in any way. There is no penalty or reward of any kind for refusing or terminating an interview. You are free to stop the interview at any time.

**7. Possible benefits to you or to others from participating in this study:** Though dog programs are now very common in both the US and in a number of foreign countries, there is almost no research on their effectiveness. I hope this research will begin to fill this gap.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time without penalty or prejudice. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the above items. If you have questions about the research that arise after this interview, please feel free to contact me at (785) 532-4968. Questions about the role of the university or your rights as a participant in this research should be directed to Rick Scheidt, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Kansas State University, (785) 532-3224.

**B. Signed Consent Portion – For participant**

I understand the study entitled: “An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections” as explained to me on page 1 and I consent to participate in the study. My participation is completely voluntary. I understand that all research information will be handled in the strictest confidence and that my participation will not be individually identifiable in any reports. I understand that there is no penalty or prejudice of any kind for withdrawing or not participating in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of investigator)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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**B. Signed Consent Portion – For investigator**

I understand the study entitled: “An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections” as explained to me on page 1 and I consent to participate in the study. My participation is completely voluntary. I understand that all research information will be handled in the strictest confidence and that my participation will not be individually identifiable in any reports. I understand that there is no penalty or prejudice of any kind for withdrawing or not participating in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## **Appendix C - Informed Consent Statement – program participants**

### **A. General Information**

**1. Name of Researcher:** Dana M. Britton, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Kansas State University

**2. Title of Study:** An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections

**3. Objectives of Study:** This study will examine the experiences of prison administrators, staff and inmates with dog training programs.

**4. Description and purpose of procedures:** This part of the research consists of interviews with program participants, staff, and administrators. This interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. During that time I will ask you questions about what you teach the dogs and your experiences in the dog training program. With your permission, I will tape record this interview so that I may use this information in my research. If you do not want to be taped I will take notes during our interview. What I hope to do is to find out what kinds of effects, both positive and negative, these programs have on participants and on prisons.

**5. Use of results/security of data:** I will use data collected in this project in published reports of the research in professional journals. You will never be identified by name in any published report. I will maintain signed consent forms and interview materials separately. All interviews will be identified only by code number (rather than by name), and consent forms will be destroyed in three years. Only I and my student assistant will have access to these interviews.

**6. The risks and discomforts are minimal. They may include:** Strictly the use of your time is required. There is no physical risk involved, and your behavior or responses will not be manipulated in any way. There is no penalty or reward of any kind for refusing or terminating an interview. Participation or lack thereof will have no effect on parole, release or any other decision relating to your status in this institution. You are free to stop the interview at any time.

**7. Possible benefits to you or to others from participating in this study:** Though dog programs are now very common in both the US and in a number of foreign countries, there is almost no research on their effectiveness. I hope this research will begin to fill this gap.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time without penalty or prejudice. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the above items. If you have questions about the research that arise after this interview, please feel free to contact me at (785) 532-4968. Questions about the role of the university or your rights as a participant in this research should be directed to Rick Scheidt, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Kansas State University, (785) 532-3224.

**B. Signed Consent Portion – For participant**

I understand the study entitled: “An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections” as explained to me on page 1 and I consent to participate in the study. My participation is completely voluntary and I understand that I will receive no benefit or penalty as a result of my participation (or lack of participation). I understand that all research information will be handled in the strictest confidence and that my participation will not be individually identifiable in any reports. I understand that there is no penalty or prejudice of any kind for withdrawing or not participating in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of investigator)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

=====

**B. Signed Consent Portion – For investigator**

I understand the study entitled: “An exploratory study of prison dog training programs in the Kansas Department of Corrections” as explained to me on page 1 and I consent to participate in the study. My participation is completely voluntary and I understand that I will receive no benefit or penalty as a result of my participation (or lack of participation). I understand that all research information will be handled in the strictest confidence and that my participation will not be individually identifiable in any reports. I understand that there is no penalty or prejudice of any kind for withdrawing or not participating in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## Appendix D - Coding tree

- 1= Index Tree
- 2=(1) Pre prison life
  - 3=(1 1) Dogs before prison
    - 4=(1 1 1) Training Experience
  - 5=(1 2) Crimes
  - 6=(1 3) Family lives
  - 7=(1 4) Education
  - 8=(1 5) Pre prison jobs
- 9=(2) Dog Training
  - 10=(2 1) Dog psychology
    - 11=(2 1 1) Pack Mentality
  - 12=(2 2) Strategies
    - 13=(2 2 1) Good strategies
      - 14=(2 2 1 1) Patience
      - 15=(2 2 1 2) Keeping dog focused
      - 16=(2 2 1 3) Being consistent
      - 17=(2 2 1 4) Caring about dog
      - 18=(2 2 1 5) Using Prison environment
      - 19=(2 2 1 6) Being firm
      - 20=(2 2 1 7) Using dog's instincts
      - 21=(2 2 1 8) Making training fun
      - 22=(2 2 1 9) Knowing the dog
      - 23=(2 2 1 10) Being confident
      - 24=(2 2 1 11) Versatility
    - 25=(2 2 2) Poor strategies
    - 26=(2 2 3) Correction
  - 27=(2 3) Knowledge and curriculum
  - 28=(2 4) Service dogs
  - 29=(2 5) Graduation
  - 30=(2 6) Perceptions of program
    - 31=(2 6 1) Certificates
    - 32=(2 6 2) Wages
    - 33=(2 6 3) Benefits
    - 34=(2 6 4) Critiques
      - 35=(2 6 4 1) Lack of Structure
      - 36=(2 6 4 2) Inmates teaching inmates
      - 37=(2 6 4 3) Training issues
      - 38=(2 6 4 4) Pity for dogs
      - 39=(2 6 4 5) Inmates running program
      - 40=(2 6 4 6) Screening participants
      - 41=(2 6 4 7) Lack of communication

- 42=(2 6 4 8) Leadership/Authority
- 43=(2 6 4 9) Minimum wage job
- 44=(2 6 4 10) Funding
- 45=(2 6 5) Community perceptions
- 46=(2 6 6) Easy job
- 47=(2 6 7) Racial division
- 48=(2 6 8) Effectiveness of Program
- 49=(2 6 9) Snitches and sex offenders
- 50=(2 6 10) Staff perceptions
- 51=(2 6 11) Washing out
- 52=(2 7) dog info
- 53=(2 8) Commands
- 54=(2 9) Dog program rules
- 55=(2 10) Socialization
- 56=(3) Interactions
  - 57=(3 1) With other dogs
  - 58=(3 2) With inmates
    - 59=(3 2 1) Community perceptions
      - 60=(3 2 1 1) Emotional impact
      - 61=(3 2 1 2) Fear of prison
      - 62=(3 2 1 3) Listening to inmates
      - 63=(3 2 1 4) Misconceptions of prison
      - 64=(3 2 1 5) Previous Prison Experience
      - 65=(3 2 1 6) Importance of program
    - 66=(3 2 2) Dog as medium
    - 67=(3 2 3) Other inmate perceptions
      - 68=(3 2 3 1) Dogs in housing unit
      - 69=(3 2 3 2) Being watched
      - 70=(3 2 3 3) Training differences
      - 71=(3 2 3 4) Snitches and sex offenders
      - 72=(3 2 3 5) Inmates liking dogs
      - 73=(3 2 3 6) Teamwork
      - 74=(3 2 3 7) Inmates not liking dogs
      - 75=(3 2 3 8) Racial issues
      - 76=(3 2 3 9) Trust
      - 77=(3 2 3 10) Potential violence
    - 78=(3 2 4) Inmate perceptions of staff
  - 79=(3 3) With staff
    - 80=(3 3 1) Being watched
    - 81=(3 3 2) Use in training
    - 82=(3 3 3) Snitches
    - 83=(3 3 4) Freedom
    - 84=(3 3 5) Staff dislike of program
    - 85=(3 3 6) Staff praise
    - 86=(3 3 7) Staff likes dogs

- 87=(3 3 8) Conflict over control of dog
- 88=(3 3 9) Dog as communication medium
- 89=(3 3 10) Staff support program
- 90=(3 4) Outside community
- 91=(3 5) With assigned dog
- 92=(4) Daily life
  - 93=(4 1) Routine
  - 94=(4 2) Benefits
  - 95=(4 3) Challenges
  - 96=(4 4) Prison life
    - 97=(4 4 1) Prison Atmosphere
    - 98=(4 4 2) Other facilities
    - 99=(4 4 3) Volunteers/organizations
    - 100=(4 4 4) Visitation
  - 101=(4 5) Other jobs during program
- 102=(5) Pre-program
  - 103=(5 1) Inmate motivations
    - 104=(5 1 2) Dog as therapy
    - 105=(5 1 3) Learning opportunity
    - 106=(5 1 4) Likes dogs
    - 107=(5 1 5) Easy work
    - 108=(5 1 6) Freedom
    - 109=(5 1 7) Disincentives
    - 110=(5 1 8) Keeping busy
    - 111=(5 1 9) Giving back
    - 112=(5 1 10) Previous exposure to program
    - 113=(5 1 12) Previous training
  - 114=(5 2) Previous jobs/other prison jobs
  - 115=(5 3) Program hiring process
  - 116=(5 4) Program Development
- 117=(6) Self perception
  - 118=(6 1) Changes
    - 119=(6 1 1) Behavioral changes
    - 120=(6 1 2) Feeling of worth
    - 121=(6 1 3) Emotional
    - 122=(6 1 4) Perceptions of others
    - 123=(6 1 5) Wanting to change
    - 124=(6 1 6) Interpersonal relationships
    - 125=(6 1 7) Perceptions of dogs
  - 126=(6 2) Giving back
    - 127=(6 2 1) Helping others
    - 128=(6 2 2) Sense of accomplishment
    - 129=(6 2 3) Giving hope to inmates



- 130=(6 2 4) Second chance
- 131=(6 3) Giving dog up
  - 132=(6 3 1) Sadness
    - 133=(6 3 1 2) Getting used to it
  - 134=(6 3 3) Seeing the dog again
  - 135=(6 3 5) Dog in better place
  - 136=(6 3 7) Glad to see the dog go
  - 137=(6 3 9) Wanting to keep the dog
- 138=(7) Future/post prison
  - 139=(7 1) Future program development
  - 140=(7 2) Training outside of prison
  - 141=(7 3) Life outside of prison
    - 142=(7 3 1) Recidivism
  - 143=(7 4) Knowledge/Education
  - 144=(7 5) Perceptions of disability
  - 145=(7 6) Life in prison
- 146=(8) Interview notes
  - 147=(8 1) Project Questions
- 148=(9) Base data
  - 149=(9 1) Race
    - 150=(9 1 1) White
    - 151=(9 1 2) Black
  - 152=(9 2) Sex
    - 153=(9 2 1) Male
    - 154=(9 2 2) Female
    - 155=(9 2 3) Mixed
  - 156=(9 3) Status
    - 157=(9 3 1) Administrator
    - 158=(9 3 2) Staff
    - 159=(9 3 3) Participant
    - 160=(9 3 4) Recipient
  - 161=(9 4) Program
    - 162=(9 4 1) CARES
    - 163=(9 4 2) Blue Ribbon
    - 164=(9 4 3) KSDS
  - 165=(9 5) Facility
    - 166=(9 5 1) 5
    - 167=(9 5 2) 20
  - 168=(9 6) Graduation
    - 169=(9 6 1) Yes
    - 170=(9 6 2) No
  - 171=(9 7) Time-in-Program
    - 172=(9 7 1) Unknown

173=(9 7 2) 4 weeks or less  
 177=(9 7 6) 7 years  
 178=(9 7 7) 3 years  
 179=(9 7 8) 11 months  
 180=(9 7 9) 8 months  
 181=(9 7 10) 3 weeks  
 182=(9 7 11) 6 weeks  
 183=(9 7 12) 2 weeks  
 184=(9 7 13) 2 years  
 185=(9 7 14) 6 months  
 186=(9 7 15) 15 months  
 187=(9 7 16) 5 months  
 188=(9 7 17) 2.5 weeks  
 189=(9 7 18) 4 weeks  
 190=(9 7 19) 1 year; 1 month  
 191=(9 7 20) 8 months; 6 months  
 192=(9 7 21) 5 months; KSDS 2 years  
 193=(9 7 22) 4 years  
 194=(9 7 23) 4 months  
 195=(9 7 24) 3 months  
 196=(9 8) Time-left  
 197=(9 8 1) 3 years or less  
 198=(9 8 2) More than three years  
 199=(9 8 3) 9 years  
 200=(9 8 4) 1+ years  
 201=(9 8 5) Unknown  
 202=(9 8 6) 2 years  
 203=(9 8 7) 3 years  
 204=(9 8 8) 12 years  
 205=(9 8 9) 40 months  
 206=(9 8 10) 6 months  
 207=(9 8 11) 13 months  
 208=(9 8 12) 7 years  
 209=(9 8 13) 10 years  
 210=(9 8 14) 5 years  
 211=(9 8 15) 6 years  
 212=(9 8 16) 2 months  
 213=(9 8 17) 15 months  
 214=(9 8 18) 3 months  
 215=(9 8 19) 7 months  
 216=(9 9) Handler Status  
 217=(9 9 1) Primary  
 218=(9 9 2) Owner  
 219=(9 9 3) Secondary  
 220=(9 9 4) Apprentice  
 221=(9 9 5) Co-Secondary

222=(9 10) Breed

- 223=(9 10 1) Border Collie
- 224=(9 10 2) Golden
- 225=(9 10 3) Lab
- 226=(9 10 4) Great Dane
- 227=(9 10 5) Jack Russell
- 228=(9 10 6) Golden Retriever
- 229=(9 10 7) Black Lab
- 230=(9 10 8) Yellow Lab
- 231=(9 10 9) Lab mix
- 232=(9 10 10) various
- 233=(9 10 11) Rottweiler
- 234=(9 10 12) Airedale-German mix
- 235=(9 10 13) Aussie-taken, bit officer
- 236=(9 10 14) Siberian Husky
- 237=(9 10 15) Border Collie mix
- 238=(9 10 16) Poodle mix
- 239=(9 10 17) Chocolate Lab

240=(9 11) Role

- 241=(9 11 1) Program director
- 242=(9 11 2) Volunteer
- 243=(9 11 3) Chaplain
- 244=(9 11 4) Inmate
- 245=(9 11 5) Teacher
- 246=(9 11 6) Various
- 247=(9 11 7) Program coordinator
- 248=(9 11 8) Correctional officer
- 249=(9 11 9) Librarian-Program coordinator
- 250=(9 11 10) Unit team leader

251=(10) Interviews

- 252=(10 1) 5P1
- 253=(10 2) 5P2
- 254=(10 3) 5P3
- 255=(10 4) 5P4
- 256=(10 5) 5P5
- 257=(10 6) 5P6
- 258=(10 7) 5P7
- 259=(10 8) 5P8
- 260=(10 9) 5P9
- 261=(10 10) 5P10
- 262=(10 11) 5P11
- 263=(10 12) 5P12
- 264=(10 13) 5P13
- 265=(10 14) 5P14
- 266=(10 15) 5P15

267=(10 16) 5P16  
268=(10 17) 5P17  
269=(10 18) 5P18  
270=(10 19) 5C1  
272=(10 21) 20S1  
273=(10 22) 20S2  
274=(10 23) 20P1  
275=(10 24) 20P2  
276=(10 25) 20P3  
277=(10 26) 20P4  
278=(10 27) 20P5  
279=(10 28) 20P6  
280=(10 29) 20KSDSP1  
281=(10 30) 20KSDSP2  
282=(10 31) 20KSDSP3  
283=(10 32) 20KSDSP4  
284=(10 33) 20KSDSP5  
285=(10 34) 20KSDSP6  
286=(10 35) 20KSDSP7  
287=(10 36) 20KSDSP8  
288=(10 37) 20KSDSP9  
289=(10 38) 20KSDSP10  
290=(10 39) 20KSDSP11  
291=(10 40) 20KSDSP12  
292=(10 41) 20KSDSP13  
293=(10 42) 20KSDSP14  
294=(10 43) 5S1  
295=(10 44) 5S2  
296=(10 45) 5S3  
297=(10 51) 5C  
298=(10 52) 5focus  
299=(10 53) 20KSDSP8-9  
300=(10 54) 20KSDSP10-11